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A MEMO ON FILM.

BY- COSTELLO, DONALD P.

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WRITTEN IN RESPONSE TO INQUIRES FROM UPWARD BOUND PROJECT DIRECTORS, THIS ARTICLE PROVIDES BRIEF DISCUSSIONS AND SELECTED REFERENCES FOR (1) INSTRUCTIONAL USES OF FILMS, (2) TYPES OF FILMS, (3) SUBJECT MATTER OF FILMS, (4) AVAILABILITY, SOURCES, AND EXPENSE OF FILMS, (5) STUDY OF THE FILM AS AN ART FORM, AND (6) FILM PRODUCTION. THIS ARTICLE APPEARED IN "IDEA EXCHANGE," VOL. 3 (NOVEMBER 1967), 8-9, 28. (RD)

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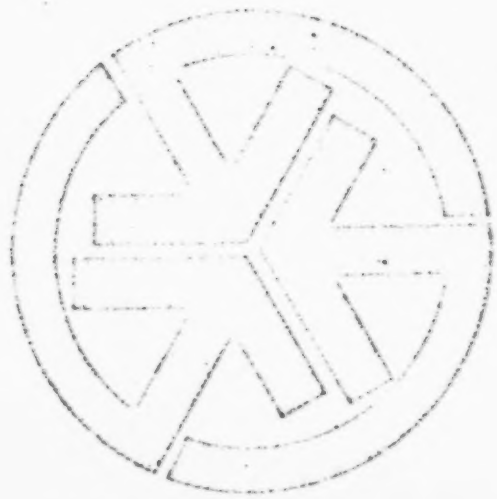

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Robert E. Christin,
director
Peg Paul, editor
Sharon Isch,
assistant editor

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by Donald P. Costello

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Film study has been used in some UPWARD BOUND programs for some time. The word that it can be effective has gotten around and several project directors have asked for information about film selection and film making. This article simply pulls together facts and ideas ('a beginning' and certainly not exhaustive), which have crossed my desk in the past few months. The material reflects UPWARD BOUND experience and curriculum approaches.

Film Selection

Films are available in 35 mm, 16 mm, and 8 mm. The 35 mm films will generally be unavailable, too expensive, and too bulky for UPWARD BOUND use. The 8 mm films are home movie size and generally not distributed. The available 16 mm films will be of three types: 1) Hollywood feature films, usually at least two or three years old; 2) short American and foreign films -- documentaries, sports, art, experimental, TV shows, travel, scientific, educational, animations, and many other types; 3) foreign feature films, usually at least a year old.

With most foreign language films, you will be able to choose between dubbed and subtitled versions. Each has its disadvantages. Dubbed versions often lose the foreign flavor of a film, which is important to its art; often inappropriate voices and poor synchronization between words and lip movements are distracting. Sub-titled versions are often hard to read because they flash by too quickly and because they are sometimes white on white. Usually subtitled versions are preferred, but this will have to be an individual choice.

Before you decide what films to order, you will have decided how you want to use the films: for motivation, as classroom supplements, to get a good discussion going, for appreciation of the art of the motion picture, or most likely for some combination of all of these. For those to whom films are a new medium, three booklets are recommended to spark ideas. They are full of much practical information about the use of films as educational tools:

John Culkin. FILM STUDY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL. Fordham Film Study Center, Bronx, New York. $1.

Tony Hodgkinson. SCREEN EDUCATION. UNESCO Publications 2960 Broadway, New York, New York. $1.

David Mallery. THE SCHOOL AND THE ART OF MOTION PICTURES. National Association of Independent Schools, 4 Liberty Square, Boston, Massachusetts. $1.

Each of those booklets will suggest several other pieces of helpful reading. Many people are currently writing on film and teaching. Several paperbacks which might provide further background and helpful information are:

Emile G. McAnany and Robert Williams. THE FILMVIEWER'S HANDBOOK. Deus Books, published by Paulist Press, Glen Rock, New Jersey, 1965.

Sheridan, Owen, Macrorie, and Marcus. THE MOTION PICTURE AND THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH. Appleton-Century-Crofts, published in cooperation with the National Council of Teachers of English, 1965.

Sources of Films

Perhaps you would like to start by checking with your local public library and with nearby college and university libraries. Many have collections of suitable films available for free use. Many libraries can furnish lists of film sources, often free, in a specific locale.

Hundreds of colleges and communities in America have active film societies, some of which have their own film libraries, and all of which have enthusiastic people dedicated to the art of the motion picture and to the use of films in education. Students associated with film societies have been of help to UPWARD BOUND in many imaginative ways. For information about nearby film societies, write to the American Federation of Film Societies, 144 Bleecker Street, New York, New York.

Some thirty-five commercial distributors serve the film-users of America. Some of them have already sent catalogues to UPWARD BOUND programs which list their films available for rental. Names and addresses of film distributors are available in all those publications mentioned above.

A very complete list of film distributors will be found in Feature Films on 16, an alphabetized listing of 6,000 feature films available in 16 mm from 35 American film distributors. It is an invaluable tool to find which distributor handles a particular film. It is available for $5 from Educational Film Library Association, 250 West 57th Street, New York, New York. Film distributors will be glad to send you catalogues if you write for them. Rented films must always be returned immediately after use, for they are always tightly booked.

Still more aids can be found or mailed for the asking: in the form of descriptions of specific films, in discussion guides for specific films, in advice on series that have worked well.

The books and pamphlets already mentioned will be helpful in many ways. Additional, more specialized, aids are:

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The National Center for Film Study, 21 West Superior Street, Chicago, Illinois, will send you their INDEX OF FILM NOTES, which lists several feature films and short films for which they can send you mimeographed study guides at fifteen cents per copy.

Study and discussion guides for many of the short films in the collection of Contemporary Films are available from that distributor, at 267 West 25th Street, New York, New York.

A booklet called FILMS FOR CLASSROOM USE is available from Teaching Film Custodians, 25 West 43rd Street, New York, New York. The films distributed by this organization are valuable for many curricular uses; but they are not available for rental, only for long term (three to five year) lease.

Program notes on particular films are available from the American Federation of Film Societies, 144 Bleeker Street, New York, New York.

A booklet called A DIFFERENT APPROACH, which contains advice on how to use films in conjunction with literature programs, is available from Films Incorporated, 38 West 32nd Street, New York, New York. They also have available, for $2.50, a packet of five booklets that would be helpful in planning a film production.

Films on Film Appreciation

Four color films on film appreciation, each approximately thirty minutes long, are available from OFM Productions, 1229 South Santee treet, Los Angeles, California. They are entitled: ELEMENTS OF THE FILM, THE LANGUAGE OF FILM, THE NATURE OF THE FILM MEDIUM, and FILM AS AN ART. These can be rented separately, or as a series. A free discussion guide is included in the rental.

Two films which show the impact of editing on film are available from American Cinema Editors, Inc., 42 South Western Avenue, Los Angeles, California. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF FILM EDITING runs for eight minutes and INTERPRETATIONS AND VALUES runs for thirty minutes.

Film-Making

The act of film-making, with 8 mm equipment, has been a very successful part of many UPWARD BOUND programs. Often film-making has been used as an enrichment or a natural extension of a film viewing program. Often it has been used as an exciting creative art in itself. An experienced film maker (perhaps a faculty member or graduate student from a college film or television department, or a student from a film society) can offer expert advice and technical know-how to such a project. Such a person usually becomes quite intrigued with the kinds of ideas UPWARD BOUND students have.

For aid in film-making, three UPWARD BOUND projects have used the services of Filmboard-NSEC, 25 Steadman Street, Chelmsford, Massachusetts, a professional consulting organization specializing in screen education. They will contract with you individually for whatever services you want: film-workshops, full-time film instructors, supplies to make films, and so on.

Film study, it seems in many cases, is uniquely suitable for UPWARD BOUND teaching. ◁